

OCT 31 1963

Dec 7 (American FSC)
X Dec 7 Cuba
X Pers 2 James B. Donovan

Americans to Fly Aid to Cuban Needy

FOIAb3b

CPYRGHT

By Mary Hornaday

Staff Correspondent of The Christian Science Monitor

The Cuban Government has granted the American Friends Service Committee permission to land a chartered plane in Havana, bearing medical supplies and food for victims of Hurricane Flora.

On the mercy plane, scheduled to leave Philadelphia on Friday, Nov. 1, with 23,000 pounds of supplies, will be four American Quakers who will work with Cuban officials in distributing the relief supplies.

Though he first declared it was hypocritical of Americans to offer aid while their government continues its quarantine, Cuban Premier Fidel Castro has given indication now that he has changed his policy.

Reasoning Obscured

Whether the shift is due to his inability to get adequate relief from the Soviet Union and Communist China or to a second look at the hurricane damage was not immediately apparent. Fatalities as a result of the storm which lashed the island for five days earlier this month have been announced by the Cubans at 1,128. More than 10,000 homes were destroyed and 20,000 damaged.

The Quakers who originally had consulted with New York lawyer James B. Donovan to approach Premier Castro finally made their arrangements by cable directly with the Cuban Premier. Since permission was received from Havana a week ago, the Quaker group has been busy making final arrangements with the United States State, Commerce, and Treasury Departments for the necessary licenses and passport validations.

Varied Shipments

Included in the shipment will be medical supplies, corn meal, canned meat, vegetable oil, and beans. Voluntary contributions from citizens of all denominations will be used to defray the costs, according to the Quaker committee's executive director, Colin Bell.

Announcing the historic mission, Mr. Bell declared in Philadelphia: "We are grateful that political conditions have not prevented this opportunity for concerned United States citizens to express their compassion to fellow men who are suffering."

"It is in the spirit of the brotherhood of all men as children of God that we desire to give aid to our neighbors in

New York material relief plans ours as well as others — will follow successfully upon this first plane-load of supplies."

Four Picked to Fly

The four Quakers who are flying to Cuba are: Frank Hunt of Moylan, Pa., expert on relief efforts; Hiram Hilly, professor of Spanish at Guilford College, Guilford, N.C.; Dr. George Perera, associate dean of the Columbia University School of Medicine; and John Hoover of Washington, D.C., a retired civil servant with wide experience in the Caribbean.

On the heels of the recent hurricane, Protestant churchmen in Cuba dispatched a plea for succor to the World Council of Churches in Geneva after Leslie E. Cooke, director of worldwide interchurch aid for the council, received a turn-down from Cuban diplomats when he applied for Western church relief workers to enter the island.

Since that time Quakers have taken the diplomatic initiative, but officials of Church World Service, Catholic Relief Services, and other humanitarian groups expressed hope here they will be able to take advantage of the breakthrough.

Resources Strained

Church World Service, relief arm of the National Council of Churches, actually has strained its resources to the limit in meeting an unprecedented series of disasters in various parts of the world.

In rapid succession it has responded to appeals sent out globally by the world council for victims of hurricanes, floods, and fires in Haiti, Brazil, East Pakistan, Italy, Cuba, and Ghana. But its officials said they are standing by to aid Cubans if permitted.

Aid already has been going to Cuba from other parts of the free world. The British Government flew in medical supplies from Nassau, and 6,000 pounds of food were dispatched to the island by the British Red Cross through the League of Red Cross Societies. Uruguay and Chile are among the Latin-American nations that have sent aid.

Peking Aid Noted

Significant in the over-all East-West diplomatic picture is the fact that whereas Communist China has sent approximately \$1,000,000 to hurricane victims, Moscow has sent only about one-tenth the amount sent by Peking. Unusually bad harvests in Eastern Europe are being held up as the reason for the Soviet Union's apparent reluctance to continue subsidizing the Castro government on a large scale.

Meanwhile, stiff opposition to all aid to Cuba—even humanitarian—was voiced in a group of United States citizens—the Committee for the Monroe Doctrine. Including among its members Spruille Braden, Charles Edison, Stanley K. Hornbeck, Admiral Arthur W. Radford, and others, it declared: "Any help we give to Castro now can only serve to continue the inhuman enslavement of the Cuban people and consolidate Communist control of Cuba as the central Communist military and subversive base in the Western Hemisphere."